

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JASPER, INDIANA
MARCH 23, 2016**

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Jasper, Indiana, was held on Wednesday, March 23, 2016, in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 610 Main Street, Jasper, Indiana.

Call to Order. Presiding Officer Mayor Terry Seitz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call.

Clerk-Treasurer Juanita S. Boehm called the roll.

Mayor Terry Seitz	Present
Council members:	
Gregory Schnarr	Present
John Bell	Present
David Hurst	Present
Earl Schmitt	Present
Kevin Manley	Present
Nancy Eckerle	Present
Dean Vonderheide	Present
City Attorney Renee Kabrick	Absent
Clerk-Treasurer Juanita S. Boehm	Present

Boehm announced that in order to have a quorum for the meeting, a majority of the council members must be in attendance. All seven council members were in attendance which is a majority; therefore, there was a quorum for the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Seitz invited all those present to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes.

The following minutes were distributed to and examined by the Council:

1. February 17, 2016 regular common council meeting

A motion was made by Council member Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Council member Earl Schmitt to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING-CDBG ASTRA THEATER

Lisa Gehlhausen with Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission and grant administrator for NextAct Inc prepared the minutes from the public hearing as part of the grant application process. The public hearing minutes are attached and made part of these minutes.

UTILITY SERVICE BOARD REPORT

General Manager of Utilities Gerald ‘Bud’ Hauersperger gave a report on the regular monthly Utility Service Board meeting held on March 21, 2016. A copy of the Utility Service Board minutes is supplied to each council member.

Review tax abatement compliance form [CF-1/PP]-Kimball Hospitality Inc. Copies of the Compliance with Statement of Benefits Form for personal property for 2016 pay 2017 from Kimball Hospitality Inc were previously submitted to the council members for their review.

Brady Werne, Beth Waltz, and Don Kaufman were present representing Kimball Hospitality Inc.

A motion was made by Council member Kevin Manley and seconded by Council member Gregory Schnarr to find that Kimball Hospitality Inc is in substantial compliance with its statement of benefits for personal property [CF-1/PP]. Motion carried 7-0.

Review tax abatement compliance form [CF-1/PP]-Kimball Furniture Group Inc. Copies of the Compliance with Statement of Benefits Form for personal property for 2016 pay 2017 from Kimball Furniture Group Inc were previously submitted to the council members for their review.

Steve Buechler, Brady Werne, and Chad Giesler were present representing Kimball Furniture Group Inc.

A motion was made by Council member Kevin Manley and seconded by Council member Earl Schmitt to find that Kimball Furniture Group Inc is in substantial compliance with its statement of benefits for personal property [CF-1/PP]. Motion carried 7-0.

Review tax abatement compliance forms [CF-1]-Indiana Furniture Industries.

Copies of the Compliance with Statement of Benefits Form for real property and for personal property for 2016 pay 2017 from Indiana Furniture Industries Inc were previously distributed to the council members for their review. Along with the CF-1 forms was a project summary explaining how the change in the market has affected their business in regards to the original tax abatement estimates.

Bernie Kreilein and Bret Ackerman along with Eric Schue with Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP were present representing Indiana Furniture Industries Inc.

Mr. Kreilein explained that the project was to be completed over a four-year period ending December 31, 2015. Phase 2 was re-evaluated due to the industry-wide drop in the demand for wood veneer product. A machine is on order to address this phase.

Kreilein explained that they employed 287 people at the time of their proposal and currently they have 274 employees. Because IFI is shifting to more of a laminate product than a veneer product, less people are needed in the production

process thus overall employment levels declined because some employees in the veneer production area have sought work elsewhere to get more hours. Kreilein also noted that they have hired 5 of the 7 additional employees that were projected.

IFI's expectation is that their sales will continue to grow and with that growth the completion of future phases of this project and the related employment level will increase. It was also noted that if IFI's project was scored today, they would score 85 points instead of 95 points thus allowing for a 9-year abatement rather than a 10-year abatement.

Eric Schue commented that Indiana code states in part that the designating body shall determine whether the property owner has made reasonable efforts to substantially comply with the statement of benefits and whether any failure to substantially comply was caused by factors beyond the control of the property owner. In his opinion IFI has made a reasonable effort to comply.

Thereafter, a motion was made by Council member David Hurst and seconded by Council member Kevin Manley to find that Indiana Furniture Industries Inc is in substantial compliance with its statement of benefits for personal property and for real property [CF-1/PP and CF-1/real property] because they made a reasonable effort to be in compliance. Motion carried 6-0-1 with Council members Gregory Schnarr, David Hurst, Earl Schmitt, Kevin Manley, Nancy Eckerle, and Dean Vonderheide voting aye while John Bell abstained due to a conflict of interest since IFI is a client of his business.

ADVISORY FINANCE COMMITTEE/BUDGET PREPARATION

Council member John Bell said he met with Clerk-Treasurer Juanita Boehm and Financial Coordinator Sharon Sander after he sent out a list of questions regarding the December 31, 2015 cash balances in each fund. He said the council needs to be prepared for the upcoming budget by giving the departments an opportunity to explain what is in their budget. He also said we should all get together and brainstorm. Council member Nancy Eckerle said she liked what the county council did when they met with each department to discuss the budget. She thought the City should have general discussion with the departments to understand what is in the budget as well as get to know the department heads. Council member Gregory Schnarr agreed that it is a lot of information to take in on budget day but he felt a finance committee was not necessary. Council member Earl Schmitt thought it was a good idea to sit down and talk with the department heads about the budget because if one only reduces an appropriation but does not cut spending, it does not help the budget. Council member Dean Vonderheide said the departments need to be given a target when preparing their budget. Council member Kevin Manley said he trusts the departments and what they need. The council does not need to be involved in their day-to-day activities. The departments should present their budget to the mayor and he should present it to the council. He also said a finance committee is not needed. Council member David Hurst recommended scheduling a meeting and whatever council members can come should come. It was the consensus of the council to proceed with a meeting with the department heads in a round table setting.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the board, a motion was made by Council member Gregory Schnarr and seconded by Council member Earl Schmitt to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

The minutes were hereby approved X with without corrections or clarification this 20th day of April, 2016.

Mayor Terry Seitz
Presiding Officer

Attest:

Juanita S. Boehm, Clerk-Treasurer

**ASTRA THEATER
PUBLIC FACILITIES PROGRAM
PUBLIC HEARING
March 23, 2016 at 7:00 pm
Jasper City Hall**

Mr. Terry Seitz, Mayor of the City of Jasper, opened the public hearing. "At this time we call a public hearing to order. This public hearing is to receive public comments concerning submission of a Letter of Intent on behalf of Next Act, Inc. for a federally funded Community Development Block Grant for the preservation of the Astra Theater. A notice appeared in The Herald on March 7, 2016 and was also posted at City Hall and sent to the news media. At this particular time Indiana 15 is representing Next Act for the grant. I notice some Next Act representatives here as well, but I call upon Indiana 15 and Lisa, please state your name and help us through what is needed for this grant please."

Ms. Lisa Gehlhausen began, "Good evening and thank you Mayor. I do have an attendance sheet circulating. If anyone has not signed it, I would like everyone to have a chance to sign the attendance sheet."

On or about April 8, 2016, the City of Jasper, (the applicant must be a city, town or county) on behalf of the Next Act, Inc., plans to submit a letter of intent to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs for a grant to preserve the Astra Theater. The grant is from the Public Facilities Program of the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program. It is funded by Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. These are federal dollars that come to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) to evaluate competitive applications seeking those funds.

OCRA requires two public hearings on this project. This first public hearing allows residents an opportunity to express their views on this project or any other project funded with Community Development Block Grant funds.

The Letter of Intent is due April 8, the application is due June 10, and awards are to be announced on July 21, 2016. I will be taking minutes. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to see if anyone has comments about the letter of intent and application being submitted. The maximum grant amount for this program is \$400,000.

Don Flick will present details of this project. Following Don's presentation, I will take comments on the proposed project. If you do comment, I ask that you state your name for the record. The minutes and comments will become part of the grant application.

The local match is estimated to be \$197,900, and the grant amount requested is \$400,000 with total project costs totaling \$597,900. This total could change. After we turn in the letter of intent, we have a site visit by OCRA to go through the project. At this time I would like to introduce Don Flick with Pyramid Architects. Pyramid has completed a Building Assessment and Rehabilitation Plan and Don will explain the plan and then we will take public comments."

Mayor Terry Seitz added "The project tonight, funded by the State OCRA, (which is a pass through of federal funding) and also includes local match. The City is not being asked to contribute dollars to the local match, but to be the fiscal agent at this point. Next Act is going to be providing the local match, just to clarify."

Lisa Gehlhausen responded "Yes, the local match will come from a bank fund account that Next Act has and other necessary funds as they move towards the June 10th deadline. Funds are not being ask from the City. The City role is the applicant. Also the grant funds must pass through the City Clerk-Treasurers office. Juanita Boehm's time as Clerk-Treasurer will include some involvement. That is the part that the City will incur."

Mayor Terry Seitz stated "This is a good opportunity for the City."

Astra Theater – Public Facilities Program – Public Hearing
March 23, 2016 – Page 2

Don Flick with Pyramid Architects from Indianapolis introduced himself and his brother Ron Flick, also an architect with the firm. “This first part of the renovation is going to be approximately a \$600,000 project. It primarily is exterior renovation, mechanical, plumbing and electrical rough-ins to get the building kind of buttoned up solid and the guts kind of taken care of. We do have a preliminary cost estimate that Pyramid Architects did. We walked through the building several times. We had different people looking at it, engineers and different tradesman. We did work up a study and we can get copies of it for anybody – both printed copies and electronic files are available.

The first phase will include re-doing the roof, masonry repair pits along the top, windows, doors and frames, replacing the storefront. You all know that the storefront on the main entrance has been sort of cobbled together over the years. We would re-do that and make it more of a period class storefront. We would repair the marquee and the sign which is a prominent part of the theater. We have to work on the fire escape that drops down into the alley because that is a second floor exit requirement. Then again re-doing the mechanical, electrical and plumbing.

That primarily would be what the scope of work is for the estimated \$600,000 project. We do have plans for future phases. I can just touch on that. We will be making the building handicap accessible. I’m sure most everybody went and saw movies there, when they were growing up. They want to create a new concession area and handicap restroom on the first floor. You may all remember those tiny little restrooms on the second floor. They also have plans for actually enlarging the stage so that bands and things can play there and working kind of a green room into the building at some point for preparation.”

Nancy Eckerle asked, “Are the restrooms part of Phase 1?”

Don Flick responded, “Just the plumbing rough-in and kind of getting to that point, but that will be a later phase. Most of the interior renovations will come at a later date. And Next Act is going for other grants to assist with these improvements. An endowment is set up at the foundation, so I think Next Act has their ducks in a row and it is very impressive what they have done so far.”

John Bell asked, “I was wondering about the timing of the phases. We talked about Phase 1 and Phase 2.”

Lisa Gehlhausen responded, “The award announcements are expected to be made on July 21st.”

Don Flick added, “Construction for Phase 1 would start fairly soon after grant award. We would have to put together final design drawings and specifications, but construction would start pretty soon after that. And some of these other grants we are putting in for could start filling in some of the later stuff fairly soon. I am sure they want to go ahead and get started.”

John Bell followed with “So if this is awarded on July 21st are funds immediately release after that?”

Lisa Gehlhausen answered, “No, actually following an award, OCRA enters into a grant agreement with the City which takes about a month to get signatures and then final design would take a couple months. And then it takes about another 30-45 days to bid. So we are probably going to utilize the rest of 2016 getting the grant document signed, and bidding, and Release of funds, which looks like construction probably early to spring of 2017. The project from grant award to the end has to be complete within 18 months. I would anticipate that it likely that construction would start in spring of 2017.”

Nancy Eckerle asked “The grant is for \$400,000, is the local match already in hand?”

**Astra Theater – Public Facilities Program – Public Hearing
March 23, 2016 – Page 3**

Mark Steczyk, President of Next Act, Inc. responded “Thank you first of all for the opportunity to be here. We are on our way to have the necessary local dollars in hand. We don’t anticipate having problems having \$200,000 in hand by the end of May or early June which is what we have to show. There was an earlier question about the interior renovation. If the city is able to help us and we are able to partner together, which we would be grateful for obviously, and we get this grant that would allow us to turn our fundraising efforts to focus on internal renovations and needs. Which would include the accessible restrooms on the first floor and renovations upstairs as well, which would also include opening up the balcony.”

Mayor Terry Seitz asked “I do have a question pertaining to the second hearing. If this is the first hearing tonight, would the second public hearing be likely at next month’s meeting?”

Lisa Gehlhausen responded “It will be sometime before June 10th.” The second public hearing will be in April or May and Ms. Gehlhausen stated she will work with the Mayor’s office to coordinate the meeting and submitting the notice to the newspaper.

Mayor Terry Seitz stated “We are here at the public hearing to receive public comments concerning a Letter of Intent on behalf of Next Act, Inc. for a federally funded Community Development Block Grant for preservation of the Astra Theater. You have heard from Lisa Gehlhausen with Indiana 15, Don Flick-Architect and also Marc Steczyk President with Next Act. Are there any other comments from the public tonight during this public hearing?”

Hearing none the Mayor also asked for further comments from the council.

With no further comments forthcoming, Mayor Seitz asked for a motion to close the public hearing. John Bell made a motion to close the public hearing, Dave Hurst seconded and the motion pass unanimously.

Mayor Terry Seitz announced “The public hearing is hereby adjourned.”

Respectfully submitted with authorization by the City of Jasper,



Lisa Gehlhausen
Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission

4-1-16

Date